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NOTES AND NEWS

Many American teachers will recall the enthusiastic study made of American schools a few years ago by Mr. J. C. Hudson, who, with the assistance of his wife, is now conducting the Home School for Boys and Girls at Inglehome, Highgate N., London. The private school which has grown out of his home work, and this visit deserves more than passing notice. Perhaps nowhere is the immediate influence of Professor Dewey's work more evident today than in this and in one or two other schools in England. A visit to the school during its first year showed a remarkable appreciation of those elements in American education which have bearing upon English conditions. Mrs. Hudson and the other teachers associated in this undertaking are people of unusual ability and the advisory committee includes Professor and Mrs. Patrick Geddes, Alfred C. Haddon and others eminent in British education, and Professors John Dewey and Earl Barnes of America. Mr. Joseph Fels, with characteristic generosity, has furnished a scholarship fund of £100.

The illustrations and subject-matter of the new announcement are suggestive of a well-organized school life leading into all the more important interests.

The English schools make much more of inspection by outsiders who judge a school in operation without reference to its relations to college entrance or other single considerations. A report in this case is made by Professor Geddes which answers many of the questions a parent or a student of education would naturally ask. Even more suggestive are the reports of the medical officers. These are made at the end of each term and so show the effect of previous examinations and of efforts made at progress.

The *School* (England) for January, 1909, reports that in Japan, in 1904, "Discipline in the schools was not well maintained. Strikes were prevalent. One of the paradoxes of the country is said to be that 'whilst elsewhere it is the master who expels a boy, here it is the boys who expel the master.' The usual practice is for the pupils to write and recommend an offending teacher to resign; if he decline they request the director to dismiss him; and failing that, go on strike. Deference to the sentiment of subordinates is a characteristic of Japanese life—a fact upon which Mr. Hearn commented, and it partly explains the apparent weakness of the teacher."

W. H. Winch in the same journal, in connection with the Chicago plan for the promotion of teachers, states: "It hardly seems to me that the scheme carries out the object which the superintendent has in mind. . . .

Are we quite sure that this never-ending examination of the teacher is just the way to secure it? Is it not of vastly more importance to find out what habits of thought and work he has instilled into his class? What has he done to inspire his boys to thought and action?"

The December number of *School Hygiene* contains some very valuable materials for the guidance of teachers in the observation of their pupils. The time has practically come when, to allow curable defects in school children to remain, is inexcusable. The Massachusetts Board of Education has issued a pamphlet entitled *Suggestions to Teachers Regarding Tuberculosis and its Prevention*. The legislature had passed an act providing that tuberculosis and its prevention should be taught in all grades of the public schools of the state in which instruction is given in physiology and hygiene. This pamphlet gives suggestions to teachers for the observation of children for the purpose of early detection of any symptoms of this disease. It teaches the simple gospel "of fresh air, day and night, sunlight, cleanliness, bathing, plenty of plain, nourishing food, and care of the teeth and bowels. If school children can be taught this hygiene, so simple, yet apparently so little appreciated, a great advance in social progress will be evident." Teachers are very diffident about making suggestions that may reflect upon the intelligence of the home; but movements that have the initiative of the State Board of Education back of them can, certainly, be made educative in a social way without making the teacher obnoxious to the community.

There are two very common causes of ill-health in children which the average teacher pays little or no attention to, and which seriously affect the child's power to do work. These are adenoids and decayed teeth. Prof. William H. Burnham discussed the former in an article in the *Pedagogical Seminary* for June, 1908. His list of special symptoms to be observed should prove valuable to all teachers who are interested in the health and work of the children they are teaching. These are:

1. Disturbances of breathing. Breathing through the nose is difficult, so the mouth is kept open.
2. Disturbances of speech. The voice has a nasal sound, since the stopping of the nose hinders clear speech.
3. Disturbances of hearing on account of the swelling of the Eustachian tubes. In this way buzzing in the ears, deafness etc., may occur.
4. Disturbances in the functions of the brain resulting in inattention, so-called *aprosodia nasalis*, and the like.

Investigation shows that from 5 to 6 per cent. of the children in the Boston schools suffer from this disorder, and that in the German schools about 10 per cent. are afflicted. In Leipzig the percentage has run as high as 23.2 per cent. Surely this is not a subject to be treated lightly, since it has been developed that there is a close relationship between mental weakness and the nasal disorders which interfere with good breathing.

The subject of dental decay is treated by *School Hygiene* in a special article. "The medical inspection of school children has demonstrated the fact that one-third to one-half of them stand in need of dental attention." Here is a typical report:

New York Children. (Report of Dr. Haven Emerson on physical condition of poor children admitted to the summer sanitarium at Sea Breeze, Long Island.) An examination of 1,478 poor children, 1 to 15 years of age, showed 278 (18.8 per cent.) with no apparent dental decay, and 1,200 (81.2 per cent.) with dental decay existing.

These revelations point most clearly to the necessity of instruction of both school children and teachers in the care of the teeth, and in the evil effects of decay. A monthly inspection of the children's teeth by the teacher, and an annual inspection by the school medical inspector, are the measures required to bring home to each child and parent a realization of the importance of the subject, Not less important is the education of all parents to the relation between sound teeth and good health.

In August, 1907, the San Francisco Board of Education adopted a plan for instruction in Civics in the Eighth Grade which should attempt to make a direct connection of the Individual with the social institutions of which he is an implicit member. The study is based directly upon the actual life and conditions of the city. The following outline will show the general plan pursued, and may serve to stimulate other work, elsewhere, along the same line. The text book used in this connection is Dunn's *The Community and the Citizen*. The outline follows: For the first half-year: The beginnings of a community. What is a community. The site of the community. What the people in a community are seeking. The family. Some services rendered to the community by the family. The making of Americans. How the relations between the people and the land are made permanent and definite. How the community aids the citizen to satisfy his desire for health. How the community aids the citizen to protect his life and property.

The outline takes up in the second part of the year the larger problems of the community life and its relationships to the larger community life of the state and nation. Problems of business, government regulation and control, waste and saving in production and consumption, community life and transportation, educational satisfactions in the community life, provisions for beauty and recreation, community provision for the religious life and interests, community care for the defective and dependent members, provision for the control of those who cannot control themselves, defects in self-government of cities, and the outlying problems of rural, state, and national government, with some consideration of the question of taxes. The effort is made

to stimulate the children to take a deep interest in community life. Have them investigate various topics by observation, inquiry, and reading. Then let their reports be a basis for fair and free class discussion. Try to make the children

conscious of what the community has done and is doing for them, and try to make them sensitive to their obligations. Stimulate the spirit of inquiry and analysis from the facts, and encourage the forming of intelligent personal opinions. Work for a proper attitude of mind rather than mere command of facts.

Such work as this is surely more fundamental than the dry abstractions commonly taught under the name of civics.

We are hearing a great deal today about the necessity of individual teaching. Very little definite information is at hand, however, to show the greater value of individual teaching over class instruction. The article by Dr. Elmer E. Jones, professor of education at the Indiana University, published in the current number of *The Psychological Clinic*, is therefore timely.

Professor Jones picked out a first-grade class, and studied their progress in learning words during a period of sixteen weeks. During this time the average child in the class learned 150 words and over. Each week that the test was applied by Professor Jones, a few more words had been added to the child's vocabulary. But there was one boy in the class who at no time during the sixteen weeks had learned more than twelve words, and on the last day of the test, at the end of the sixteenth week, he knew only two words of the total number that had been taught the class. The boy was then given individual teaching. At the end of the second week the test showed that he knew eighteen words, and every week he added a few words to his vocabulary, until at the end of fourteen weeks of individual teaching he knew 130 words, doing just about as well as an average child under class instruction. Professor Jones's results are a strong argument in favor of the establishment of special classes for children who are supposed to be mentally defective, as this boy was supposed to be, but are merely unable to progress because the methods of the classroom do not reach them individually.

The report of educational work in Alaska is very interesting.

In the years 1907 and 1908 the Alaska division has erected twenty-three new school buildings for natives in Alaska; has strengthened the provision for the industrial training of the natives, including the provision for the teaching of agriculture and other industries in the southern districts and the establishment of nine new centers for the reindeer industry and the distribution of reindeer to natives in the more northern region; and has instituted a campaign for sanitary education and the improvement of sanitary conditions with particular reference to combating tuberculosis.

The Legislature of Indiana is considering a very comprehensive bill embodying an "act to protect and conserve the health and lives of school children by providing for their medical inspection, by providing healthful schoolhouses, and by requiring the teaching of hygiene." Little by little we move forward.